

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-03 SR-02 ORM-03 IO-14 AID-20 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 AGR-20 EB-11 COME-00

TRSE-00 DRC-01 /160 W

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R 130625Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6889

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, CB

SUBJECT: STAFFDEL VISIT KLEIN/FRENCH

1. SUMMARY: IN GENERAL STAFFDEL VISIT WAS DEVOTED TO FOLLOW-UP ON POINTS RAISED DURING KLEIN'S PREVIOUS VISIT IN MARCH 1973. GENERAL LINE OF QUESTIONING CONCERNED ADEQUACY OF PRESENT REFUGEE PROGRAM RELATIVE TO REFUGEE REQUIREMENTS, COORDINATION OF VOL AGS AND INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES' ROLES IN CARRYING OUT HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS; THE ROLE OF GKR IN REFUGEE RELIEF; KHMER MILITARY TREATMENT OF REFUGEES AND RESETTLEMENT PROGRESS. STAFFDEL ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES IN THE REFUGEE PROGRAMMING HAD TAKEN PLACE DURING THE PAST YEAR. NEITHER KLEIN NOR FRENCH HAD MANY COMMENTS TO MAKE DURING THE COURSE OF THEIR VISIT AND DID NOT DISCUSS CONCLUSIONS WITH US. END SUMMARY.

2. STAFFDEL ARRIVED THURSDAY, JUNE 20, FROM SAIGON. MORNING WAS TAKEN UP BY MEETINGS WITH AMBASSADOR, USAID DIRECTOR AND OTHER MISSION REPRESENTATIVES. SHORT BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS WERE PRESENTED N THE ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, MILITARY AND REFUGEE SITUATIONS.

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3. AMBASSADOR DEAN OUTLINED RECENT GKR MILITARY SUCCESSES,

STRESSING THAT GKR OFTEN DID NOT GEL FULL CREDIT FOR THEIR VICTORIES. THE AMBASSDAOR URGED STAFFDEL TO SEE AS MUCH AS THEY COULD AND TALK TO AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE IN ORDER TO GET A BALANCED VIEW OF THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA. AT SUBSEQUENT LUNCHEON HOSTED BY THE AMBASSADOR CONVERSATION CENTERED ON KC MISTREATMENT OF POPULATION IN THEIR CONTROL, MOTIVATION OF KC AND PROSPECTS FOR PEACE NEGOTIATIONS.

4. STAFFDEL FOCUSED ON TWO PARTICULAR POINTS DURING ECONOMIC BRIEFING WITH USAID DIRECTOR OLMSTED. ONE WAS THAT PRESENT PL480 LEGISLATION DOES NOT PERMIT SALES AGREEMENTS TO BE SIGNED ON A BASIS WHICH WOULD PERMIT CURRENCY USE PAYMENTS TO BE GRANTED FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE. THE OTHER POINT RELATED TO THE CEILING LIMITATIONS SET BY SECTION 656 OF ITS EFFECT ON HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS IN THE KHMER REPUBLIC. STAFFDEL EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT VOLUNTARY AGENCY PROGRAMS WERE UNABLE TO AFFORD FUNDING OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BOTH U.S. AND TCN, REQUIRED TO COVER REFUGEE PROGRAMS. THE RESULT WAS THAT REFUGEE PROGRAMS WOULD BE UNNECESSARILY RESTRICTED IN SCOPE UNLESS VOLAG PERSONNEL WERE EXCLUDED FROM CEILING LIMITATIONS.

5. STAFFDEL WAS INTRODUCED TO VOLAG REPRESENTATIVES. INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD DURING LUNCHEON HOSTED BY DEPUTY DIRECTOR SHOLIN. AFTER LUNCH, A MEETING WAS ARRANGED WITH UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE TO KHMER REPUBLIC. THE UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE GAVE GENERAL BRIEFING ON UNICEF'S PROGRAM. THE ONLY QUESTION RAISED BY STAFFDEL CONCERNED THE ADEQUACY OF THE UN PROGRAMS IN GENERAL AND WHO IN PARTICULAR.

6. THE BALANCE OF THE AFTERNOON WAS SPENT DICUSSING ICRC PROGRAM WITH DIRECTOR, INDOCHINA OPERATIONS GROUP. KLEIN WAS INTERESTED IN ICRC'S ROLE WHEN IOG CEASED TO FUNCTION. PEREZ ASSURED KLEIN THAT ICRC WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE REFUGEE PROGRAM IN INDOCHINA REGARDLESS OF WHAT HAPPENED TO IOG. KLEIN ASKED PEREZ IF HE HAD RECEIVED OTHER SUPPORT FROM U.S. GOVERNMENT BESIDES THE DIRECT GRANTS. PEREZ SAID HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR INFORMAL SUPPORT FROM USAID FOR SUCH SERVICES AS AIRCRAFT TO TRANSPORT TEAMS AND MEDICAL EQUIPMENT. EVENING DINNER HOSTED BY USAID DIRECTOR OLMSTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ATTENDED BY VOLAGS, GKR OFFICIALS AND USAID STAFF GAVE STAFFDEL OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS REFUGEE SITUATION INFORMALLY.

7. FRIDAY, JUNE 21, STAFFDEL VISITED KOMPONG THOM, WHERE THEY WERE BRIEFED BY GKR OFFICIALS AND TOURED REFUGEE CAMPS. STAFFDEL WAS GIVEN A DETAILED ACCOUNTING OF THE SERIES OF SEVEN BATTLES IN KOMPONG THOM AREA SINCE 10 MAY. BRIEFING

ALSO INCLUDED SUMMARY OF VOLAG EFFORTS IN AREA AND RDF PROJECT INVOLVING THE RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES. FOLLOWING BRIEFINGS, KLEIN TOURED THE REFUGEE AREAS AND DR. FRENCH VISITED THE PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL.

8. KLEIN WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN DETERMINING REASONS FOR REFUGEES LEAVING COMMUNIST-HELD AREAS. KLEIN'S QUESTIONING CENTERED ON WHETHER REFUGEES HAD COME TO KOMPONG THOM OF THEIR OWN VOLITION OR AS THE RESULT OF FORCED MILITARY POPULATION RECLAMATION OPERATIONS. REPLY FROM REFUGEES (THROUGH INTERPRETERS) WAS THAT LIFE UNDER KC WAS UNBEARABLE AND THAT IT WAS THIS FACTOR (AND NOT GKR) THAT CAUSED THEM TO LEAVE. KLEIN, HOWEVER, REMAINED SKEPTICAL. PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS ALSO REMARKED TO KLEIN THAT REFUGEE RICE RATIONS WERE INADEQUATE. (CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO INCREASING RATION LEVELS FOR REFUGEES).

9. AFTER LUNCH HOSTED BY PROVINCE CHIEF, THE STAFFDEL PROCEEDED TO KOMPONG CHHNANG. PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WAS TO VISIT RECEPTION SITES FOR NEWLY ARRIVING DISPLACED PERSONS, WHO WERE BEING EVACUATED BY A FANK MILITARY OPERATION FROM LONG VEK, WHICH HAD BEEN UNDER SIEGE BY KC FORCES FOR THE PAST TWO MONTHS. THE VISIT WAS SHORT DUE TO TIGHT SCHEDULE. STAFFDEL'S ONLY COMMENT WAS THAT THERE WAS OBVIOUSLY A NEED FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO NEWLY-ARRIVED REFUGEES. FRENCH OBSERVED THAT THE GOVERNMENT MEDICS WHO WERE ON THE SCENE WERE SHORT OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES, AND VOLUNTARY AGENCY MEDICAL TEAMS, WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING SENDING, HAD NOT YET ARRIVED. CARE WAS ON THE SCENE AT THE RECEPTION CENTERS WORKING WITH GKR OFFICIALS WHO WERE HANDLING EMERGENCY DISTRIBUTIONS.

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ACTION EA-14

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NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 IO-14 SR-02 ORM-03 AID-20 AGR-20 EB-11 COME-00

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10. ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON STAFFDEL DIVIDED, WITH KLEIN MEETING CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES AND VISITING SOME OF THE REFUGEE AREAS AROUND PHNOM PENH. DR. FRENCH MET WITH WORLD VISION MEDICAL STAFF. AT 1730 DR. FRENCH MET WITH MR. SAUKAM KHOY, PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE. PURPOSE OF THE CALL WAS TO GIVE SAUKAM KHOY AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXTEND HIS BEST WISHES TO SENATOR KENNEDY.

11. FRIDAY EVENING DINNER WAS HOSTED BY MINISTER KONG ORN, NEWLY APPOINTED MINISTER OF REFUGEES AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFFDEL AND REPRESENTATIVES OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE. MINISTER KONG ORN TOASTED KLEIN/FRENCH IN ENGLISH AND REITERATED NEED FOR ASSISTANCE TO DISPLACED PERSONS.

12. ON SATURDAY, JUNE 22, KLEIN WAS BRIEFED BY RESETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION. KLEIN INDICATED AFTERWARD THAT HE WAS IMPRESSED WITH PROGRESS MADE TO DATE. KLEIN QUESTIONED THE LAND TITLE PROCEDURES. PRESIDENT CHHIEK EXPLAINED THAT LAND USED FOR RESETTLEMENT WHICH WAS ALREADY PRIVATELY OWNED WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO REFUGEES UNTIL THE WAR ENDED AND RETURNED TO VILLAGES WAS POSSIBLE. WHILE KLEIN MET
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WITH RDF, DR. FRENCH MET WITH WHO REPRESENTATIVE DR. MAURICE LEHIR AND DISCUSSED WHO PROJECTS.

13. AT 0930 STAFFDEL ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR DEAN AND USAID DIRECTOR OLMSTED MET WITH PRESIDENT LON NOL. THE CONVERSATION REANGED OVER THE REFUGEE SITUATION IN GENERAL. THE MARSHAL MADE SEVERAL POINTS: (A) THE STAFFDEL WAS THANKED FOR THEIR SUPPORT TO REFUGEE RELIEF AND IN PARTICULAR SENATOR KENNEDY FOR HIS STATEMENT ON THE FEBRUARY 11 FIRE IN PHNOM PENH; (B) THE RECENT INFLUX OF REFUGEES INTO KOMPONG THOMAND OTHER LOCATIONS DEMONSTRATED GROWING SUPPORT FOR THE GKR AND LOSS OF SUPPORT FOR THE KC; AND (C) THE GKR WAS GIVING HIGH PRIORITY ATTENTION TO REFUGEE AFFAIRS AND THAT RECENT CABINET CHANGES REFLECTED THIS CONCERN.

14. AFTER LON NOL VISIT, STAFFDEL AGAIN SPLIT UP, WITH KLEIN MEETING WITH MINISTER OF REFUGEES, KONG ORN, AND CARE DIRECTOR. THEY VISITED CAMP WHERE CARE IS SUPPORTING

TRAINING FOR LEADERS OF REFUGEE GROUPS. DR. FRENCH MET WITH MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THE NEWLY APPOINTED MINISTER KIM VIEN, WITH WHOM HE DISCUSSED ORGANIZATION OF THE MINISTRY AND BUDGET PROBLEMS.

15. DUE TO A CANCELLATION OF AIR FRANCE FLIGHT, STAFFDEL STAYED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 23. THEY TOOK THIS OPPORTUNITY TO DRIVE ABOUT PHNOM PENH. THEY ALSO VISITED WITH PRIME MINISTER LONG BORET WHO, UPON HEARING OF THE DELAYED DEPARTURE, REQUESTED THEM TO STOP BY HIS HOME FOR AN INFORMAL VISIT. PRESENT AT THE MEETING WERE MINISTER KONG ORN, SPECIAL PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT DY BELLONG, AND WILLIAMSON OF USAID. LONG BORET DESCRIBED AT SOME LENGTH THE EVENT LEADING TO THE EXCAPE OF REFUGEES INTO KOMPONG THOM FROM THE COMMUNIST-HELD AREAS. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT APPROXIMATELY 12,000 OF THE REFUGEES CAME INTO KOMPONG THOM WITHOUT MILITARY ASSISTANCE AFTER THEY OVERTHREW THEIR COMMUNIST LEADERS. THE BALANCE OF THE REFUGEES LIVED TOO FAR FROM KOMPONG THOM TO MAKE THE TRIP WITHOUT PROTECTION AND REQUESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT MILITARY FORCES ESCORT THEM TO SAFETY. STAFFDEL MADE NO COMMENT.

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16. THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO DISCUSSED THE RECENT CABINET RESHUFFLE SAYING THAT SINE THE REPUBLICAN PARTY MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT HAD REFUSED TO RECOGNIZE OR DEAL WITH THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, HE WAS OBLIGED TO REPLACE THEM WITH MORE RESPONSIVE MINISTERS.

17. KLEIN SAID THAT HE FELT OBLIGED TO INFORM THE PRIME MINISTER THAT MANY IN THE UNITED STATES DID NOT BELIEVE THE KHMER GOVERNMENT TO BE TRULY REPRESENTATIVE. HE ADDED THAT HE BELIEVED THAT THE KHMER GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS POPULAR AND REPRESENTATIVE.

18. DR. FRENCH COMMENTED BRIEFLY ON THE GKR PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM. THE SUM OF HIS COMMENTS WAS THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT DEVELOP EXPENSIVE MEDICAL FACILITIES WHICH SERVED A REALTIVELY FEW PEOPLE, BUT SHOULD INSTEAD CONCENTRATE PROGRAMS AT THE VILLAGE LEVEL WHICH WERE MORE EFFECTIVE IN TERMS OF MASS DISEASE PREVENTION AND WERE RELATIVELY INEXPENSIVE. STAFFDEL TOOK LEAVE OF THE PRIME MINISTER AT NOON AND DEPARTED PHNOM PENH SHORTLY THEREAFTER.

19. COMMENT: THE TENOR OF THE KLEIN/FRENCH VISIT WAS FRIENDLY. NEITHER KLEIN NOR FRENCH, HOWEVER, HAD MANY COMMENTS TO MAKE DURING THEIR VISIT NOR DID THEY DISCUSS

WITH US CONCLUSIONS THAT THEY MAY HAVE ARRIVED AT. KLEIN APPEARED TO BE PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN (A) THE ADEQUACY OF PRESENT US/VOLAG REFUGEE RELIEF EFFORTS, (B) GKR EFFORTS TO ASSIST REFUGEES AND (C) MOTIVATION BEHIND RECENT REFUGEE MOVEMENTS IN KOMPONG THOM AND OTHER LOCALES, I.E., WHETHER REFUGEES HAD BEEN CREATED BY FANK OR CAME IN ON THEIR OWN. QUESTION OF POSSIBLE CORRUPTION IN REFUGEE PROGRAM WAS ALSO RAISED SEVERAL TIMES BUT NOT PURSUED. DR. FRENCH APPEARED TO FAVOR A MEDICAL APPROACH THAT CONCENTRATED AT THE GRASS-ROOTS LEVEL RATHER THAN AT THE PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL HOSPITAL LEVEL. HE COMMENTED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT NORTH VIETNAMESE HEALTH SYSTEM (WHICH HE HAD OBSERVED DURING LAST YEAR'S TRIP) WAS ORGANIZED ALONG THESE LINES AND HAD ACCOMPLISHED MUCH WITH LITTLE OUTLAY OF FUNDS.

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Message Attributes

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